CITY OF WELLS.

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URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY.

Medical Officer's Report for 1904.

To the Urban Sanitary Authority of the City of Wells.

30th JANUARY, 1905.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the year 1904.

Population and Area.

The Population of the District was stated to be 4849 at the last census, the area being 720 Acres.

Geology.

Lias and Limestone, Gravel and Red Marl at lower levels.

Occupation of Inhabitants.

A considerable number of the inhabitants are employed at two large Paper Mills in an adjoining district. A Steam Laundry, Engineering Works, and a Brush Factory employ many hands, some are engaged in Agriculture, but the majority in ordinary trading pursuits.

Water Supply.

As stated in previous reports, the Water Supply (which is in the hands of the Council), is of great purity, and delivered at high pressure, the service being constant. No scarcity has been felt during the year, but nothing has as yet been done to increase storage; Deacon's Meters are being fixed at various points, and will doubtless do much to prevent waste.

Sewers and Sewage Disposal.

In consequence of the somewhat serious state of affairs at the Sewage Works,—the filter beds and Septic Tanks being overworked and thrown out of gear by reason of large quantities of subsoil water finding its way into the old masonry sewers; and diluting the Sewage to such an extent as to prevent its efficient purification—an eminent Engineer (Mr. Strachan), has been called in by the Council. He advises the retention of these sewers for the purpose of carrying off the subsoil and storm water, and laying new water-tight Sewers alongside them; his proposals are under the consideration of the Council, they appear to be an efficient remedy for the evil, and if carried out will doubtless enable the Sewage to be dealt with in a proper manner, so that a pure effluent may result.

Scavenging.

House refuse is removed daily in covered carts to a field adjoining the Sewage Works; the work is carried out by the Council's Servants, and I have heard no complaint of any failure of duty on their part.

Housing of the Working Classes.

The smaller houses have been improved and made more sanitary during the past few years, some have been demolished and rebuilt, and others erected. Overcrowding is seldom met with.

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Disinfection.

Disinfection is thoroughly looked after by the Inspector of Nuisances, both during the illness, and after the recovery of cases of infectious sickness. Rooms are disinfected by Formalin, clothes by the Steam Disinfector, whilst efficient disinfectants are supplied to those needing them for ordinary purposes, as well as for washing floors, &c.

Inspection.

The Bakeries, Milk Shops, and Slaughter Houses have been visited in company with the Inspector, they have been found clean, and well ordered, and no cause of complaint has come to my notice. There are no underground Bakeries in the City, and few Workshops, such as there are, have been visited and found to be in accordance with the provisions of the Factory and Workshop Act as regards air space, ventilation, cleanliness, and provision of sanitary conveniences. In only very few instances is work given out to be done at home, the Inspector has only been able to furnish me with the names of five home-workers, three women and two men.

Bye-Laws.

A code of Bye-Laws are in force.

Lodging Houses.

There are two registered Lodging Houses, which are regularly visited by the Inspector and reported to be clean and well-conducted; they are far above the average houses of this class.

Notification.

Only nine cases of Infectious Sickness have been notified during the year—Measles one, Enteric 2, Scarlet Fever two—the other four being simple Erysipelas in old persons.

Two cases of Scarlet Fever were sent into the Isolation Hospital during the year.

Causes of Death.

One death resulted from Phthisis, and eight from other diseases of the Respiratory Organs, five persons died from Cancer.

Of the deaths recorded thirteen persons were over 80 years of age, two of them being over 90.

Three Inquests were held during the year.

One hundred and twelve Births were registered, forty-four males and sixty-eight females, the Birth Average being 23·09 per 1000 living.

Sixty-two residents died during the year, the Death Rate being 12·78.

The death of twelve Infants was recorded, the Infant Mortality being 107 per 1000 births.

No person having died from Zymotic Disease, the Zymotic Rate is Nil.

I append the Report of the Inspector of Nuisances, and copies of the Tables required by the Local Government Board.

Yours faithfully,

R. Purnell,

Medical Officer of Health.

Inspector of Nuisances' Summary of Work for the Year ending Dec. 31st, 1904.

Premises visited on complaint or information	231
Letters and Written Notices served	47
Notices served *re* Infectious Disease	9
Weekly Visits to Slaughter Houses	572
Quarterly Notices served "To thoroughly Lime Wash Slaughter Houses"	44
Quarterly Visits of Inspection to Bake Houses	48
Workshops Registered and Visited	34
NUISANCES REMOVED—	
Choked or Defective Closets put into proper order ..	7
Defective Drains properly cleansed and relaid	14
Cases of Overcrowding	4
Pigs kept contrary to Bye-Laws	4
Defective Shooting to Eaves	5
Accumulations of Ashes, Refuse, &c.	21
Smoke Nuisances, Bad Smells, &c.	12

All the Dairies, Milk Shops, and Public Stable Yards I have inspected at regular intervals, and have found them in good condition and clean.

Wm. H. Jenkins,

January 11th, 1905. *Inspector of Nuisances.*